



Memorandum

Department of Planning and Building

Date: Monday November 5, 2007

To: Design Review Committee

From: Harold E. Phelps, III, AICP Associate Planner

Subject: Preliminary Design Review of Concordia Lutheran Church and School for the CPF-1 site in Otay Ranch Village of Windingwalk (Village 11)

Background:

This preliminary design review was originally scheduled for May 7, 2007. The applicant requested additional time to make minor revisions to the site plan. The proposed project requires a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) and is scheduled for the Planning Commission public hearing on November 14, 2007. The Planning Commission has requested that all projects that require approval by the Design Review Committee (DRC) be reviewed by the DRC prior to public hearings for project approval by the Planning Commission such as Conditional Use Permits.

Proposal:

The project will utilize the 5-acre Community Purpose Facility (CPF-1) site at the focal point center of the Village Core within Otay Ranch Village 11, located at the easterly terminus of Birch Road along Discovery Falls Drive, between Windingwalk Street to the south and the Private Recreational Facility (PRF) site to the north, near the roundabout at Exploration Falls Drive.

The design of the Village Core includes a variety of pedestrian orientation features. The 10-ft. village pathway enters into Village 11 along the south side of Birch Road and crosses Discovery Falls Drive in front of the CPF site, where it continues south on the east side of the street. The Village Paseo runs north south between Hunte Parkway up to the CPF site. In addition, the design of the Mixed-Use Commercial Site (MU-1) on the south side of Birch Road and the Multi-Family Residential Site (Neighborhood R-24/25) on the north side of Birch Road incorporate diagonal pedestrian paths pointing to the focal point center of the CPF site.

The proposed project site plan requires an amendment to the Village 11 Sectional Planning Area (SPA) Plan and a Revised Tentative Map to relocate the 1-acre Town Square (P-2) from the easterly terminus of Birch Road, south to the northeast corner of Discovery Falls Drive and Windingwalk Street. In addition, the pedestrian easement at the center of the site is proposed to be relocated to the northern boundary of the site, adjacent to the Private Recreational Facility (PRF) swim club at the northern terminus of the Village Paseo. The applicant states that relocating the Town Square and

the Pedestrian Easement is necessary in order to create a cohesive relationship between the four church and school buildings on the site. These buildings include a 600-seat Sanctuary/Worship Center, a 1-story Preschool, a 2-story Fellowship Hall/Elementary School and a Gymnasium/Multi-Purpose Facility.

If the Planning Commission and City Council approve the SPA Amendment and Revised Tentative Map, the applicant has a proposal to meet the mandatory site plan elements that would have been provided where the Town Square and Pedestrian Easement were located. The proposal on the site plan shows a public access space in the form of a 120-ft. wide central plaza (90-ft. between covered arcades) at the terminus of Birch Road where the Town Square was previously located, and a pedestrian path through the plaza and around the north side of the sanctuary building that connects with the Village Paseo where the Pedestrian Easement was previously located.

Of note, the pedestrian path through the central plaza would be a private property amenity and could be closed to the public as the property owner sees fit, as opposed to being a public easement that could not be closed without City Council action.

The applicant is requesting that the preliminary design review primarily focus on their proposed campus layout if the amendments and mapping is approved along the architecture of their four buildings they are proposing for the CPF-1 site that will come back to the DRC at a future public hearing.

Analysis:

The Windingwalk Village 11 Master Precise Plan calls for Irving Gill style architecture. Mandatory CPF site requirements include buildings that incorporate landmark architecture and focal point vertical elements such as towers. In addition, buildings shall incorporate materials such as the Otay Ranch community stone, colors, forms and textures.

It appears that the building plans and elevations are striving towards meet the mandatory site plan elements, such as the tower features in the form of raised box 28-ft. and 35-ft. tall towers on both sides of the central plaza serving as architectural focal points on the corners of the 20-ft. tall pre-school and 28-ft. fellowship hall buildings. The 31-ft. tall worship center building itself possesses a 45-ft. tall steeple tower architectural feature. The architecture of the buildings is simple, and the covered arcades located in front of them mask most the elevations. It is unknown what types of materials or if any stone may be utilized on any portion of the buildings or covered arcades.

Staff believes the Pre-School and Fellowship Hall/Elementary School buildings should be located closer to Discovery Falls Drive and provide a level of architectural detail that will compliment the pedestrian orientation of the village. There is a 7-1/2-ft. landscape setback behind the sidewalk, but the Design Review process can waive the required 15-ft. setback established in the CPF development standards.

As for the proposed central plaza and pedestrian connection to the Village Paseo, both design features need further refinement. Some suggestions for the central plaza are as follows:

- (1) Provide a certain amount of softscape or usable green space features such as turf to break up the rigid hardscape concrete grid which currently only shows a small water feature at the center towards the front of the plaza at Discovery Falls Drive;
- (2) Provide seating areas around the fountain and other potential landscape features to encourage passive use of the central plaza in fulfillment of its intended function as a public access open space.

In addition, the pedestrian connection through the central plaza needs to be more carefully delineated from Discovery Falls Drive to the path around the north side of the worship center to the Village Paseo. Some suggestions:

- (1) Provide a distinguishing pavement material that would encourage pedestrians to follow a certain path into the central plaza towards the Village Paseo. This pavement treatment needs to respond to the two diagonals paths directed towards the CPF site from the MU-1 and R-24/25 neighborhoods across the street.
- (2) Specify low-profile shrubbery (reaching no more than 4-ft. in height) on the south side of the Pre-School building so that pedestrians coming from the R-24/25 Neighborhood can make the visual connection through the central plaza to the Village Paseo.

Recommendation:

Staff and the applicant would like to receive comments regarding the proposed architecture, the central plaza and the pedestrian connection to the Village Paseo from the Design Review Committee.

Attachments:

1. Design Review Checklist for the CPF Site (Master Precise Plan)
2. Design Review Checklist for the Town Square P-4 Site (Master Precise Plan)

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